Crisis in Sports: An Assessment of the Ongoing Vulnerability to Terrorism in the Modern Age through an Analysis of the 1972 Munich Olympics and the 2013 Boston Marathon

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Chapter One: Introduction

Purpose

This thesis examines and compares the terrorist attacks at the 1972 Munich Olympics and the 2013 Boston Marathon in order to assess the ongoing vulnerability to terrorism at international sporting events, in specific, and the global environment, in general. In each of these instances, terrorists took advantage of the vulnerability of large international sporting events and launched attacks that had both political and social implications. Although each attack had separate motives, results, and repercussions, both incidents served as crises in a rising media age and impacted public policy. This paper compares and contrasts the 1972 Munich Olympics and the 2013 Boston Marathon through theoretical analyses of Downs' Issue Attention Cycle and Birkland's Focusing Events Theory, as well as through a comparison of the crises' dominant features. Over the course of the 40 years separating the events, security and emergency response methods have improved, as have technology, media, and information flow. Even with these modern techniques, however, today's generation, as with its predecessors, still lives in an age of vulnerability to terrorism. The conclusion combines the analysis of the issue-attention cycle and the potential public policy changes in accordance with the 1972 Munich Olympics attack and the 2013 Boston Marathon bombings to argue that there is no fool-proof prevention method to the issue of vulnerability to terrorism and that the global community will to continue to be vulnerable in the future.

Methodology

This paper uses Anthony Downs' Issue-Attention Cycle Theory and Thomas Birkland's Focusing Event and Public Policy Theory to analyze and compare the terrorist attacks at the 1972 Munich Olympics and the 2013 Boston Marathon. Both theories incorporate the idea that certain problems capture the public's attention more than others and create awareness and public policy changes. Downs' five-stage issue-attention cycle describes the process of how an issue captures the public's attention only to swiftly fade before it is resolved. The events leading up to, during, and following the Munich Olympics attack and the Boston Marathon bombings clearly follow the five stages of Downs' issue-attention cycle. The issue-attention cycles of the Munich Olympics terrorist strike and the Boston Marathon bombings underscore the problems of the United States' and the global environment's vulnerability to terrorism. Birkland's Focusing Event and Public Policy Theory states that sudden, unique events that disrupt the norms of society possess the potential to initiate public policy changes. In his theory, Birkland defines a Type Two focusing event as a unique, new crisis and/or problem, whose occurrence calls for blame and responsibility. The second part of his theory states that the public policy implications of these events depend on the media attention and political reactions the crisis attracts. An analysis of the stages of the Munich Olympics assassinations and the Boston Marathon bombings in Downs' issue-attention cycle provide evidence to define the crises as Birkland's Type Two focusing events, generating widespread media coverage and public policy changes. Analyzing the Munich Olympics terrorist attack and the Boston Marathon bombings with a combination of Downs' and Birkland's theories

provide a unique way to assess the ongoing issue of the world's vulnerability to terrorism, particularly at international sporting events.

Databases and Sources

The main databases used for this project were LexisNexis and EBSCO. LexisNexis is an online database that provides access to periodical sources, such as academic journals, newspapers, and magazines. EBSCO is another online database that offers access to e-book, e-journals, and other research databases. The periodicals chosen for use in this thesis are highly reputable and of international recognition. The description and analysis of the 1972 Munich Olympic crisis used both primary and secondary sources. Because the Boston Marathon crisis happened recently, there are a limited number of written publications on the topic. Primary documents, mainly newspaper and magazine articles, serve as the sources of reference.

The secondary sources used for this project include books and studies conducted by experts in government, terrorist and crisis research, and crisis communication. The secondary sources provide reviews and conclusions of the 1972 Munich massacre from the time of attack and current decades. The varied sources allowed for different perspectives and more in-depth research and analysis of the crises.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Perspective

Imagine waking up to the sound of eight gunmen bombarding a hotel room or crossing the finish line after the race of a lifetime only to be knocked down short by an unknown blast. These were the dramatic moments athletes and runners faced at the 1972 Munich Olympics and 2013 Boston Marathon due terrorist attacks. Each of the attacks targeted international sporting events and highlighted the issue of vulnerability to terrorism throughout the global hemisphere. On September 5, 1972, the "Games of Peace and Joy" (Reeves, p. x) turned into the Games of Murder and Fear as a result of terrorism. Eight members of Black September, a Palestinian terrorist organization, infiltrated the Olympic Village and broke into 31 Connollystrasse, which housed Israeli athletes. The eight terrorists, Luttif Afif, Jamal Al-Gashey, Mohammed Safady, Afif Ahmed Hamid, Khalid Jawad, Ahmed Chic Thaa, Adnan Al-Gashey, and Abu Iyad, brutally attacked innocent Israeli athletes and took them hostage. Following a botched rescue effort by the German government, the incident escalated into a fatal shootout. Black September murdered 11 Israeli athletes and lost three men of its own in the attack. The Israeli casualties were Amitzur Shapira, Kehat Shor, Andrew Sptizer, Jacov Springer, Moshe Weinbert, Yossef Gutfreund, David Berger, Zeev Friedman, Eliezer Halfin, Yossef Romano, and Mark Slavin. The attack violated public belief that such an iconic event was immune to terrorism.

On April 15, 2013, the heightened emotions of 20,000 marathon runners, over 500,000 spectators, and millions of international television viewers changed from excitement and triumph to panic and intense fear when a celebrated tradition turned deadly. Two brothers, Tamerlan and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, exploded bombs near the finish

line of the 117th Boston Marathon in an act of terrorism. The blast left eight people dead and hundreds of others injured (Levs & Plott, 2013). Once again, the world was left in a state of crisis, as terrorists attacked a symbolic sporting event. Due to their settings and lasting effects, these crises serve as two of the most prominent examples of terrorism in history.

According to Dr. Grant Wardlaw (1982), an expert research criminologist at the Australian National University and author of *Political Terrorism: Theory, Tactics and Countermeasures*, the origins of terrorism date back to the eighteenth century during the French Revolution. The 1798 *Dictionnaire of the Academie Francaise*, a French dictionary, defined terrorism as, "abuse with criminal implications" (Wardlaw, p. 18). Since then, the general public uses the term "to denote almost every imaginable form of violence . . ." (Wardlaw, p. 18). The nature of terrorism has evolved with the modernization and innovation of organizations and tactics. In his work, Wardlaw (1982) defines modern political terrorism as,

> "the use, or threat of use, of violence by an individual or a group, whether acting for or in opposition to established authority, when such action is designed to create extreme anxiety and/or fear-inducing effects in a target group larger than the immediate victims with the purpose of coercing that group into acceding to the political demands of the perpetrators" (p. 16).

Since the 1700s, terrorism has developed into the preferred method for exacting revenge upon and making statements to political enemies. In their quest for political power, terrorists use violent tactics to induce fear in widespread audiences and to demonstrate their power and ability to wreak havoc on the lives of innocent people. The 1972 Munich Olympic attack and the 2013 Boston Marathon bombings support Wardlaw's modern definition of terrorism. Black September and the Tsarnaevs targeted large groups of

innocent people in order to communicate political messages. Black September attacked Olympic athletes as part of their violent political campaign against Israel. The Tsarnaevs, born in Chechnya, home to many extremists, harmed runners and spectators at a celebrated event in an effort to wreak havoc for personal revenge and to exploit American vulnerability to attack.

As the methods of terrorism become more violent and complex, counterintelligence agencies work to develop prevention and response plans that limit their effectiveness. Despite these efforts, the number of political terrorist attacks has continuously increased since the 1970s. A 1980 report on international terrorism, released by the United States Central Intelligence Agency, documented 6,714 incidents between 1968 and 1980 (Wardlaw, 1982). According to the "Global Terrorism Index Report" (2012), international terrorism increased in prevalence and overall global impact from 2002-2011, with over 4,700 attacks in 2011 alone. Over the ten-year period of the study, global terrorism increased 464%, with attacks averaging a 93% success rate. These numbers correlate with the increased number of terrorist organizations and the evolution of global networks. As described in the United States Central Intelligence Agency's "*National Strategy for Combating Terrorism"* (2003),

> "The terrorist threat is a flexible, transnational network structure, enabled by modern technology and characterized by loose inter- connectivity both within and between groups. In this environment, terrorists work together in funding, sharing intelligence, training, logistics, planning, and executing attacks. Terrorist groups with objectives in one country or region can draw strength and support from groups in other countries or regions" (p. 8).

According to the strategy, the global environment enhances the vulnerability to terrorism as it provides more settings and opportunities for groups to attack and to network. These coordinated efforts result in wider, more devastating attacks. In his work, Wardlaw

(1982) cited the argument of B.M. Jenkins, an expert in terrorist research and current senior adviser at the RAND Corporation, as to what adds to vulnerability is the fact that "[International terrorism] makes the world its battlefield: it recognizes no boundaries to the conflict, no neutral nations" (Jenkins qtd. in Wardlaw, p. 45). Despite superior efforts, no nation can isolate itself from terrorism. Due to the unpredictability of the phenomena, everyone has an equal chance of being targeted. Global networks allow terrorists to transcend literal and moral boundaries around the world. As a result, the targets and the effects of terrorism become more widespread.

In addition to the development of global networks, the rise of the digital age and technological advancements contribute to the ongoing vulnerability. As Brian Jackson (2013), Director of the Safety and Justice Program at RAND, pointed out in "The Olympics and Terrorism: Why the Games Remain an Appealing Target," "the internet provides a forum for terrorists' chatter and musings to be made public, and often reported broadly." The advancements of internet/digital aid and technology enhance terrorists' interest and successful execution of attacks. The ability to broadcast their actions across multiple outlets provides increased impetus to attack. The international appeal and media coverage of sporting events offer an especially enticing setting for terrorists. From the Olympics to the Boston Marathon, international sporting events evoke feelings of celebration, unity and togetherness. The inclusive spirit brings friends and foes together on a platform of peace. Yet, it is this same spirit, positivity, and attention that attract terrorists. Today, sporting events continue to remain vulnerable to terrorism, as they provide ideal settings and opportunities for organizations and governments to send far-reaching political messages.

Even though they had their differences, both the Munich Olympics and the Boston Marathon attacks had clear objectives, and each party knew its desired results and long-term outcomes of its actions. Although attacks can appear random and spontaneous, terrorists spend a considerable amount of time and resources to plan an effective strike. As Wardlaw (1982) described, "Terrorism has objectives, a point which is often obscured by the fact that, to the observer, terrorist acts are random and directed at killing those whose deaths can be of no value to the terrorist cause" (p. 17). The attacks in Munich and Boston were not random acts of violence, but rather well-thought out and executed acts of terrorism designed to create perpetual fear and panic among the general public and to send a political message to individual nations. Due to the suddenness of some attacks, the public often renders terrorism as an impulsive act. Terrorists, however, plan attacks well in advance with definitive motivations and goals in mind. Black September targeted a group of people that were directly associated with the political struggle its nation was a part of. The Palestinians' motivation came from a desire for revenge and recognition. According to Abu-Iyad, a leader of Black September and the mastermind behind the attack at Munich, the Palestinian's three goals were, "'to present the existence of the Palestinian people to the whole world, whether they like it or not' . . . 'to secure the release of 200 Palestinian fighters locked in Israeli jails' . . . 'to use the unprecedented number of media outlets in one city to display the Palestinian struggle – for better or for worse" (qtd. in Klein, p. 34). The Palestinian terrorists had three clear objectives for their attack and took advantage of a vulnerable setting to employ a method that achieved all three.

Due to the recency of the crisis, not all of the details or motives behind the Boston Marathon bombings have been discovered. Although the bombings came as random to the general public, the brothers planned them in advance. In fact, the terrorists plotted future attacks as well. From what details Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, the surviving bomber, has shared, the attacks stemmed from the brothers' extremist beliefs and resentment. The Tsarnaevs, as native Chechens, felt animosity towards the United States. They intended to send a message that America is not an exception to vulnerability and attack. The Tsarnaevs not only used the attack to make a political stand for Chechens but also to strike against the United States' image of freedom and safety. The attack exposed the United States' vulnerability to terrorism and permanently stained an event of celebration and unification. The brothers placed the bomb in a location that would hurt the most people. The two people who died and the hundreds of others who suffered injuries may not have had value to the overall terrorist cause, but the strike sent a message that anyone, at any time, can be attacked. The bombings left a dark mark on the 2013 Boston Marathon, just as the ones engineered by Black September forever tarnished the Olympic Games.

According to Dr. Fishman (2013), former chair of Boston College's Communications Department and crisis communication expert, the three characteristics of a crisis are the element of surprise, a high threat to important values, and a short response time. The terrorist attacks that occurred on September 5, 1972 and April 15, 2013 fall into the category of crisis events. The hostage strike and the bombings came as surprises on days of international sporting competition and celebration. The Munich massacre threatened the international values of peace, prosperity, and integrity. The crisis

called for an immediate response in order to safely resolve the hostage situation and restore the image of the Olympic Games. Similarly, the Boston Marathon attack threatened the American values of freedom, public safety, and patriotism and required a quick response time in order to limit the damage, to find those responsible, and to keep the public calm and informed. The terrorist attacks in Munich and Boston theoretically define crises and serve as models for future crises at international sporting events.

Anthony Downs, a crisis communication theorist, explained the nature of a crisis through five stages. Downs' Issue-Attention Cycle Theory outlines a crisis, such as a terrorist attack, in an organized, step-by-step process. The crisis starts with a pre-problem, advances to alarmed discovery and euphoric enthusiasm, moves to the realization of the cost of significant progress, gradually declines from intense public interest, and then ultimately arrives at the post-problem stage. Downs' Issue-Attention Cycle offers an effective way to outline and to critically analyze the terrorist attacks in Munich and Boston. The crises are better understood, evaluated, and compared by a theoretical analysis of their respected stages.

Another theorist, Thomas Birkland, categorized crisis events, such as the Boston Marathon, into Type One and Type Two focusing events. According to Birkland (1997), a focusing event is a sudden, unexpected occurrence that upsets norms and possesses the potential to influence public policy. Type One focusing events are naturally occurring disasters that are seen as acts of God (Fishman, 2013). Type Two focusing events are unique, new crises and/or problems, whose occurrence calls for blame and responsibility. The public policy implications of these events depend on the media attention and political reactions the crisis attracts. The Munich Olympic terrorist attack and the Boston

Marathon bombings issue-attention cycles help to define the crises as Type Two focusing events with potential public policy changes in regards to the issue of international vulnerability to terrorism.

Conclusion

This chapter provides an overview of the two major events, discusses previous research on the topic, and introduces the two theorists, Downs and Birkland, I will be using to analyze the crises. In Chapter Three, I will use Downs and Birkland to examine the Munich Crisis. In Chapter Four, I will use these theorists to explain the Boston Marathon. In both cases, I will utilize a similar format to discuss the stages of the crisis and why each incident became a focusing event. In Chapter 5, I will compare the findings of each theoretical analysis to draw conclusions that add new dialogue to the discussion on the issue of vulnerability to terrorism.

Chapter 3: Black September's 1972 Munich Olympics Attack

Downs' Stages of the Issue-Attention Cycle

Pre-Problem Stage

The first stage in Downs' (1971) issue-attention cycle is the pre-problem, in which "some highly undesirable social condition exists but has not yet captured much public attention, even though some experts or interest groups may already be alarmed by it" (p. 39). The pre-problem stage of the 1972 Munich Olympics terrorist breaks down into two main issues: the development and prevalence of terrorism and terrorist organizations at the time and the International Olympic Committee's and German government's preparations for the Olympics. The two pre-problems contributed to one massive crisis.

The Development of Terrorist Organizations and Prevalence of Terrorism

The conflict between Israel and Palestine has a long, turbulent history. The main struggle began after World War II, when Jews were awarded the land of Israel. Since then, the Israelis and Palestinians have been involved in intense violence and warfare. In 1967, a fight along the borders of Israel, known as the Six Day War, escalated the conflict. Over the course of six days, Israel defeated the Arab states at the Egyptian, Syrian, and Jordanian borders (Ensalaco, 2008). The defeat came as an embarrassing blow to the Arab states and triggered even more resentment towards the Israelis. In *Middle Eastern Terrorism*, Mark Ensalaco (2008), a Political Science professor and director of human rights research at the University of Dayton, observed, "The contemporary era of terror began after Israel's victory in the Six Day War in 1967, an

event that radicalized the Palestinian national liberation movement" (p. 2). A demoralizing Arab defeat along the three major fronts of Israel sparked the modern age of terrorism. The Six Day War served as an impetus for the development of an organized Palestinian resistance movement, heavily reliant on terrorism, under the leadership of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO).

Black September, the Palestinian terrorist organization responsible for the 1972 Munich attacks, became an extension of the PLO in 1970. The Palestinian resistance movement established the group following a brutal defeat to its Jordanian "allies" in September of 1970 and named it "Black September" as a means to remember and to promote revenge for the crippling actions that had occurred (Ensalaco, 2008). Black September performed its first terrorist strike on November 28, 1971. The group publicly assassinated Wasfi Tel, Prime Minister of Jordan, in the lobby of a hotel (Ensalaco, 2008). After the completion of its first mission, Black September followed up the campaign with its first "terrorist spectacular" (Reeve, p. 71), a hijacking operation in Europe. Members of Black September hijacked a plane destined for Tel Aviv that was filled with a majority of Israeli passengers. The goal of the operation was to take the passengers as hostages and use them to make an exchange for Palestinian prisoners in Israel, (Ensalaco, 2008). Although the operation ultimately failed, Black September made its first direct strike on Israelis and sent a message that its attempts would only grow in size and violence in the near future.

The year 1972 witnessed the elevation of Black September onto the main stage of international terrorism. The group launched its first attack in 1971 but did not procure attention and recognition until its 1972 campaigns, which included a hijacking, a second

assassination, and attacks on European natural gas plants and petroleum refineries (Ensalaco, 2008). In the months leading up to the Olympics, Black September picked up its campaign, creating an uncertain and unsafe environment. The surge of Palestinian terrorist attacks, which heavily targeted Israelis, signaled the potential for an attack at the upcoming Games.

Preparation for the Olympics

The second part of the pre-problem consisted of the International Olympic Committee's and the German government's preparations for the Games. The International Olympic Committee denied Palestine's request to participate in the 1972 Games. Although Palestinian authorities outwardly expressed frustration and feelings of unfairness, the International Olympic Committee did not prepare for Palestinian retaliation or a strike at the Games (Ensalaco, 2008). However, West Germany had already been the target of Palestinian terrorist attacks in the recent past. The PFLP, another Palestinian terrorist organization, and Black September had previously launched attacks on Israelis in West Germany, including one in Munich (Ensalaco, 2008). In *Middle Eastern Terrorism*, Reeve observed, "It was amid this period of rampaging Palestinian terrorism that Israel prepared to send its athletes to the Olympics in Munich" (p. 39). West German officials and the International Olympic Committee, preoccupied with ensuring an image of "Peace and Joy," failed to address the previous successful attacks on West German soil as precursors for a future one on its grand stage.

The Germans committed themselves to ensuring the event would live up to the title of "The Games of Peace and Joy." Hosting its first Olympics since Nazi rule and

genocide, the Germans wanted to project an image of peace and prosperity, at the cost of the Games' safety and security. The 1972 Munich Olympics were to be the largest and most attended Games in history, with 10,490 athletes participating (Reeve, 2000). The size of the Games, in combination with the invention of new satellite technology for live broadcast, made it "the mass-media event of the century" (Reeve, p. x). Despite these facts, the Germans spent only $2 million on security. Leading up to the Olympics, Israeli officials questioned the insufficient amount of security and the unsafe position Israeli's first-floor apartments in the Olympic Village. The International Olympic Committee denied Israel's request for a personal security detail in order for increased protection of its athletes. Ironically, other nations under less threat, such as the United States, were able to provide their own security in addition to what was already in place (Groussard, 1975). Prior to the Games, the Israeli officials asked for extra protection for their athletes, but the International Olympic Committee and the German government denied what could have been moves that deterred the attack.

Another part of Down's first stage in the issue-Attention cycle regards conversation among experts about the possible threat or issue. In the case of the Munich Olympics, Israeli officials and the International Olympic Committee failed to heed expert advice on the high threat of attack. Prior to the 1972 Games, Dr. Georg Sieber, a West German forensic psychologist, produced 26 worst-case scenarios for security officials. After studying the major terrorist organizations and tactics of terrorism at the time, Sieber laid out 26 different possible ways terrorists could target the Olympic village, stadiums, spectator areas, and the city of Munich (Wolff, 2003). His Situation 21 eerily foreshadowed the events that took place on September 5, 1972. As explained in

Alexander Wolff's 2002 *Sports Illustrated* article, "When the Terror Began," Sieber gave,

> "the following particulars: At 5:00 one morning, a dozen armed Palestinians would scale the perimeter fence of the Village. They would invade the building that housed the Israeli delegation, kill a hostage or two, then demand the release of prisoners held in Israeli jails and a plane to fly to some Arab capital. Even if the Palestinians failed to liberate their comrades, Sieber predicted, they would 'turn the Games into a political demonstration' and would be 'prepared to die.... On no account can they be expected to surrender'"(Sieber qtd. in Wolff).

As it happened, his predictions turned into reality. Sieber credited his expertise in psychology in allowing him to place himself in the minds of Palestinian terrorists and to generate a plan that would satisfy their M.O. (Wolff, 2002).

As evidenced by the events leading up to the Games, the rise in international terrorism and the lack of proper security measures increased the vulnerability to attack at the 1972 Munich Olympics.

Alarmed Discovery and Euphoric Enthusiasm

The second stage of Downs' (1972) issue-attention cycle, alarmed discovery and euphoric enthusiasm, occurs as "the public suddenly becomes both aware of and alarmed about the evils of a particular problem . . . [but exhibits] euphoric enthusiasm about society's ability to 'solve this problem' or 'do something effective' within a relatively short time" (p. 39). It is the stage in which a crisis event occurs and brings the problem to the center of public attention. The discovery stage of the Munich attack revealed that political conflicts transcend the involved parties' boundaries and pose a threat to hope and optimism. Consequently, when the conflicts enter the international arena, they negatively impact the lives of innocent, uninvolved parties. In the year preceding the

Munich Olympics, the world witnessed the Palestinian/Israeli conflict intensify from afar. As the conflict became increasingly violent and more widespread, international officials remained uninvolved and held out hopeful beliefs for a peaceful resolution, especially with the Olympics approaching. In his work, Reeve (2008) described the optimistic feeling leading up to the 1972 Olympics, "To many of those watching the Games, it seemed that amid increasing international tension sport offered the only chance of sanity, a means of communicating with international enemies on an individual human level" (p. xii). With the increase in terrorism and violence worldwide, the Olympic Games offered a chance for nations to come together in peace in an atmosphere of celebration and harmony. Prior to the Opening Ceremonies, Andrew Spitzer, one of the Israeli athletes participating in the 1972 Games, stated, "The idea of the Olympics . . . is the fact that you can forget that you're two nations, or two warring nations, and you can come together in sport, and through sport find the good in each other and make friendships, forge relationships, and find brotherhood with each other . . ." (qtd. in Reeve, p. 51). Spitzer's words reflect the positive and harmonious aspirations for the Munich Games. Instead, Black September violated these optimistic beliefs and goals and took advantage of an international sporting event to advance a national political conflict. They exploited the naivety of the public and demonstrated that a celebratory and internationally inclusive event could be used as a platform for political violence. As Reeve (2008) concluded in his work, "The image of a family of nations competing together away from politics was exposed as fallacy" (p. 245). The strike revealed that vulnerability to terrorism crossed boundaries, specifically in political conflict, and encompassed a larger body of uninvolved nations and citizens.

Another detail of this stage involves the media's role in discovery and attention. Media coverage generates and enhances interest in the crisis at this stage of the issue-attention cycle. The 1972 Olympics were the first Games showcased on live television. Consequently, the live broadcast and video allowed the media to air and report every minute detail of the attack, from the hostage stage to the gunfight. Although "The press had only sparse details . . . everyone there knew it was a critical moment in history: a terrorist attack at the Olympic Games? . . . Reports of the attack began leading television and radio news broadcasts around the world" (Reeve, p. 17). The disturbing details and images entered the minds of millions of viewers around the world. Due to the excess coverage and the media's altered presentation of the events, ". . . the entire Munich crisis was played out like a real-life soap opera on television screens across the globe" (Reeve, p. 69). The video footage and photos shown in the media overly dramatized the situation and led viewers to make false assumptions about the crisis. The media played an influential role in spreading not only the news of the attack but also the public fear and alarm that followed. Citizens of all nations not only became aware of the intensity of the conflict between Palestine and Israel but also the impact that political crises can have in the international sphere. Black September proved that no setting or event was off limits and that everyone was vulnerable to their attacks. They gave no immunity to innocent people or sacred occasions.

When the public sees hope for a peaceful resolution, the second stage of Downs' issue-attention cycle transitions from alarmed discovery to euphoric enthusiasm. The euphoric enthusiasm stage of the 1972 Munich Olympics terrorist attacks had a limited scope in terms of an optimistic resolution. At the Olympics, euphoric enthusiasm peaked

when media outlets erroneously reported that all of the hostages had been saved. The news brought false hope and security to the families of the Israeli athletes and sparked a phony sense of relief for the international public. Conrad Ahlers, the press secretary and official spokesman for the German Federal Government, further deepened the false hope with his public statement that the hostages had been saved. He diminished the severity of the situation and increased enthusiasm of a peaceful future with his comment, "I think [the attack] will be forgotten after a few weeks" (qtd. in Reeve, p. 129). Ahlers' statement exhibited the lack of communication among government officials and overall ignorance of German officials and the International Olympics Committee on the severity of the incident.

After the media corrected the report and relayed the news of the 11 Israeli casualties, the public returned to a state of panic and alarm. Hope for a peaceful resolution disappeared. While Israelis were hopeful the German government would take care of the situation, they also knew that their own response would be one of revenge that would lead to more violence. The Black September attacks revealed the depth of the political conflict and the merciless lengths the sides were willing to go in order to achieve their political goals. For Black September and the Israeli terror response team, the only optimistic end involved the elimination of the enemy.

In the international sphere, the euphoric enthusiasm stemmed from the responses of the United Nations and governments of global powers, such as the United States and Great Britain. If they were to get involved, the general public believed in the guarantee of a peaceful resolution. From the general public's perspective, international leaders would not allow their citizens to be subjected to the risks associated with Black September and

other related terrorist organizations. The public leaned on the shoulders of international leaders to resolve the now international crisis and enthusiastically believed in the attainment of this goal.

In the aftermath of the attack, feelings of alarm transitioned to limited optimism. The discovery of the depth and severity of the Isreli/Palestinian conflict limited the euphoric enthusiasm of the public. While the Israelis and Palestinians looked to violence as means for resolution, the general public still held out hope for peace.

Realizing the Cost of Significant Progress

Downs' (1972) third stage of the issue-attention cycle, realizing the cost of significant progress, comes as the public recognizes that solving the problem will not only cost money but also will require major sacrifices. Because of the multiple independent groups involved in the crisis, this stage includes several different realizations and definitions of progress. The International Olympic Committee, the Germans, and the Israeli leaders all had different agendas when it came to progress.

In the initial stages of the crisis, the International Olympic Committee refused to let the cost of progress impact the Games. On the day of the attack, the International Olympic Committee did not meet until 7 p.m. to discuss the crisis, 14 hours after Black September took the hostages. When the committee finally met, Avery Brundage, the IOC President, publicly declared, "The Games must go on" (qtd. in Reeve, p. 96). His declaration exemplified the ignorant attitude the IOC had towards the severity of the issue and its refusal to let political conflict ruin the image of the Munich Games. The International Olympic Committee suspended the Games on September 5, only to reopen

them the next day. The officials selfishly believed in the realization that stopping the competition would take away from their efforts to hold a successful Olympic Games. The International Olympic Committee, in the midst of the attack, stayed focused on keeping the Olympic spirit and built a façade of continuous "peace and joy" by remaining ignorant to the situation at hand.

For the International Olympic Committee, significant long-term progress involved stricter security measures and restoring the image and meaning of the Olympic Games. The costs would come at the expense of international participation and spectator ease and enjoyment. Charles Bierbauer (1996), former CNN Senior Washington Correspondent, perfectly described the costs of this progress, "In great measure, it has been since 1972 that the general public has submitted to security searches in airports, arenas and other public events - and learned to live with the threat of terrorism." Since 1972, participants, spectators, media members, and all other attendees at Olympic Games and other international sporting events have been subjected to full-body inspections, metal detection, bag checks, and identification verification upon entrance. All serve as inconvenient but necessary measures of security in the era of terrorism.

Up until the 1972 Olympics, the host country planned and financed all of the safety and security measures. The crisis in Munich, due in large part to the unorganized and lack of security personnel, caused the International Olympic Committee to establish strict criteria for security at future Games. In 1972, the German's had a $2 million budget for security. ("Political Aspects of the Olympic Games"). In 1976, just four years later, Montreal spent over $100 million on security alone. In addition, Olympic officials now had to consider the current international political issues in progress and the political and

social environments of potential host cities ("Political Aspects of the Olympic Games"). They had to take into account the implications of inviting nations in political conflict and the danger posed to the involved and uninvolved countries' athletes. The costs associated with preventing terrorism at future Olympics not only involved technology and personnel but also political awareness and intelligence.

For the Germans, enhanced preparation, organization, and communication defined progress. During the crisis, German government and security officials appeared unorganized, unprepared, and understaffed. Prior to the Games, the officials designated the handling of all affairs to the Bavarian government, rather than the federal government. This action served as the main facilitator of the chaotic crisis response. Federal officials were unable to send in troops, level orders, or take any progressive action due to the policies granting the Bavarian government full control over any issue. The Bavarian government refused the help of the federal government, as well as Sayert Matkal, Israel's professional counterterrorism response team. Officials believed that the efforts of these groups would complicate the rescue mission and implicate West Germany into the political conflict. The costs of utilizing external aid outweighed the benefits, so the Bavarian government continued the rescue effort on its own. In the aftermath of the Games, the Germans adjusted their policies of federal government involvement and established a counterterrorist unit of their own, known as the GS-9. The nation believed the assembly of the GS-9 would not only prevent a future attack at home but also help to deter international terrorism, as well. Additionally, Downs' third stage (1972) states that the public considers the use and advancement of technology as the best solution to nearly all crises. Accordingly, the military equipped GS-9 with all modern warfare and

intelligence technology, thus enabling them to make significant progress in the arena of terrorism.

For Israelis, the cost of significant progress meant more sacrifice, violence, and fear. The Israeli response was one of retaliation and revenge. Significant progress for them meant eliminating those responsible for the Olympic attacks. The main cost comprised of civilian lives and sacrifice. In their case, however, the Israelis were willing to incur these costs. The Israeli government organized and funded a secret terrorist organization to eliminate members of Black September and the PLO. Dubbed "Committee X," the organization, which comprised of senior Israeli politicians and officials, designed an assassination campaign (Reeve, 2000). General Aharon Yariv, the overseer of the campaign, stated "Operation Wrath of God," the plan's unofficial title, "'went back to the biblical maxim of an eye for an eye'" (qtd. in Reeve, p. 161). The Israelis answered violence with more violence. The assassination campaign recommended the use of any kind of terror tactic necessary to destroy the enemy, wherever and whenever (Reeve, 2000). For the Israelis, the benefits of significant progress, eliminating the enemy, outweighed the costs, jeopardizing human lives.

As indicated by their responses, the groups involved in the crisis had individual notions for progress. While the International Olympic Committee and the German government focused on enhancing security, the Israelis concentrated on plotting revenge. The costs associated with these goals varied in significance. Ensuring safety at future Olympics came with financial and social costs. Designing a counterterrorist organization consisted of political and technological costs. Engaging in violence included moral and individual costs. The willingness of the groups to incur these costs associated with

significant progress, especially in the case of the Israelis, led the general public to lose interest in the crisis.

Gradual Decline of Intense Public Interest

In the fourth stage of the issue-attention cycle, Downs (1972) described "a gradual decline in the intensity of public interest in the problem" (p. 40) occurs as people either become discouraged, threatened, or bored with the issue at hand. People start to turn their focus to other issues to no longer deal with or to suppress concerns regarding the current problem. In the aftermath of the Munich crisis, the main decline came in the form of the decreasing public interest in the Palestinian/Israeli conflict. Additionally, new international conflicts arose, such as the energy crisis and spread of Communism, that funneled attention away from the Palestinian/Israeli conflict. The public shifted their efforts away from the escalating violence in the Middle East and towards more optimistic issues, such as solving the world's oil problems and halting the spread of Communism in Southeast Asia. The 1972 Munich Olympics attack had put the Palestinian/Israeli conflict at the center of international attention. However, as Israelis responded to the violence with more of their own, people began to turn away from the bloodshed and to let the two sides settle the matter in the absence of international involvement. The constant violence deterred public interest and international involvement. In *Middle Eastern Terrorism*, Ensalaco's explanation of the overall conflict and responses revealed why the public's interest declined. Ensalaco (2008) stated, "The waste of innocent life marked the Arab-Israeli conflict from the beginning. Palestinian terrorists found justification for killing innocent Israelis, Israeli soldiers rationalized the deaths of innocent Palestinians as

collateral damage" (p. 48). Ensalaco's description of the violent nature of the conflict demonstrated the reasoning behind the public's desire to remain neutral in the situation. Although the Black September attack proved that local political conflict can disrupt international peace, the public looked to stay out of the political affairs of the Middle East and move on from the crisis. The public and the International Olympic Committee did just that in 1976 when Montreal hosted the XXI Olympic Games. Despite its own controversies, the Montreal Olympics attempted to restore the peaceful image and atmosphere of the event and to avoid any connection or reminder of the past tragedy. The public took the chance to revel in the cheerful, competitive spirit of the Olympics, rather than to dwell on the past or worry about the present political issues. They put the image of the Munich Games in the past and replaced them with ones of celebrations in Montreal.

The Post-Problem Stage

The final stage in Downs' issue-attention cycle occurs as the problem moves from "the center of public concern . . . into a prolonged limbo . . ." (Downs, p. 40). The problem remains unsolved, yet stays in the backs of the minds of the public. International crises, like the 1972 Munich Olympics, become symbols for comparisons to similar occurrences in the future. As time progressed, the public's interests shifted toward other crises, but once the 1976 Olympics came around, the public was reminded of the tragedies that occurred and the potential threat of another attack. The international sporting event was and is just as vulnerable to attack now as in the past. The 1972 Munich Olympics presented the potential dangers associated with hosting international

events and assembling large international audiences. Additionally, the 1972 Olympics provided significant contributions to the considerations and preparations for future Olympics. In his review, Reeve (2008) pointed out the long-term effect of the Munich Games, stating, "Yet the 1972 Black September attack is impossible to ignore. It was a turning point in world sport; never again would it be possible to separate major sporting events from politics" (p. 245). Prior to 1972, conversations leading up to the Olympics focused on the athletes competing and the honor associated with hosting the Games. In contrast, as a result of Black September's successful campaign, vulnerability and the level of threat become the main issues. Every two years, the Winter and Summer Olympics arrive, surrounded by conversations of political conflict, terrorist threats, and public safety. The host country enters the international center stage under enhanced scrutiny. The country's political ties and issues enter the mainstream media. News coverage exposes every minute detail of the preparation and the potential risks of the event. For example, media coverage and conversations leading up to the 2014 Sochi Olympics focused on Russia's political conflicts and the violent environment of nearby areas. News reports constantly mentioned the hostile nature of Russia and its government and made it seem as if the threat of terrorism had never been higher. Due to crises, such as Munich, discussions preceding the Games now highlight the heightened security measures and the risks associated with hosting the Games in the midst of current domestic and international political conflicts.

Birkland's Focusing Event Theory

Type-Two Focusing Event

Thomas Birkland's theory (1997) describes focusing events as "sudden, unpredictable events . . . [that] influence the public-policy process" (p. 1). Birkland classified focusing events into two categories: normal and new. Crises categorized as normal focusing events have occurred before and are actuarially predictable. New focusing events are those that have never occurred before or occurred in the distant past (Fishman, 2013). The 1972 Munich Olympic terrorist strike fits Birkland's description of a new focusing event. Black September's assault at the Munich Olympics served as the first large-scale terrorist attack at an international sporting event. After 1972, the focus of the International Olympics Committee shifted from efforts of peace and joy to efforts of maximizing security due to the constant threat of terrorism. The Black September attack "create[d] uncertainty and unpredictability" (Fishman, p.2) not only in the immediate moment but also in the future. Athletes, spectators, and international officials did not know whether to expect another attack. The event sparked an international study into terrorism and potential plots to limit the chances of a future occurrence. No matter how strong these efforts were, no one could reverse the constant feelings of uncertainty and unpredictability Black September created and extended over all future Olympics and international sporting events.

According to Birkland (1997), type two focusing events also lead the public to search for blame and responsibility. During and after the Munich attack, Olympic and Israeli officials, the Israeli athletes' families, and the general public spread blame and responsibility among different parties. The Israeli government blamed the Palestinian

Liberation Organization for the direct attack, but it placed responsibility for the inefficient response and the fatal outcome on the German government. Upon gaining word of the attack, the Israeli Prime Minister, Golda Meir, charged the German government with the task of solving the hostage situation. Meir refused to concede to the demands of Black September and relayed a message to German officials, writing, "The responsibility of the crisis falls on West Germany. The Israeli government expects the West German to do all in its power to secure the release of the hostages . . . Israel hereby pledges its trust in West Germany . . ." (qtd. in Reeve, p.55). Because the attack occurred on German soil, Meir and the Israeli government had no choice but to leave the situation in the hands of the West German government and hope that it ensured the safety of its athletes and citizens. The West Germans' lack of preparation and experience, however, dashed any hope of a peaceful resolution. German officers, who were onsite at the time, stated that as time progressed, "It was obvious to all the officials that the Palestinians were in total control of the situation" (qtd. in Reeve, p. 48). Witness accounts and studies of the German security preparation and response support the Israeli government's placement of at least partial blame and responsibility on the German government. From the outset, German efforts to solve the hostage situation lacked organization and leadership. Aaron Klein (2007), author of *Striking Back* and a former Israeli intelligence officer and a correspondent in *Time* magazine's Jerusalem bureau, furthered this observational opinion, stating, "The Federal Republic of Germany had no hostage negotiation team, and the men seemed lost, adrift, lacking in ideas, yet unwilling to accept advice" (p. 52). The West German government claimed full-range authority despite the fact that it did not have the plans or the resources to be the sole actor. Because

of the intense focus on presenting "The Games of Peace and Joy," the German government and security officials were unprepared for an attack of such a degree. With a $2 million on security budget, the German government employed just 25,000 security officials for their disposal (Groussard, 1975). They dispatched 2,000 undercover, unarmed police officers in Olympic Village. These men patrolled the grounds with a walkie-talkie to serve as their only weapon. In regards to this futile effort, Klein (2007) remarked, "German authorities were well equipped to deal with unruly men and copious quantities of beer, but were utterly unprepared for a terrorist attack" (p. 26) and "the men at [German] disposal were novices, entirely lacking experience in counterterrorist maneuvers" (p. 65). The Germans complicated, rather than reduced, the stress and severity of the attack with their inexperience and ill-equipped security team and counterterrorist action.

In the years following the 1972 attack, German officials openly admitted to their faults in preparedness, training, and overall security efforts. Manfred Schreiber, the Munich police chief in 1972, acknowledged, "'Our police force was totally unprepared for a terrorist attack of this kind'" (Schreiber qtd. in Reeve, p. 227). Heinz Hohensinn, a German police officer at the time, went even further in his disclosure, "'Our training at that time regarding terrorism was absolutely insufficient if existent at all. Today both training and equipment are at a completely different level'" (Hohensinn qtd. in Reeve, p. 234). Although blame for the direct attack falls upon Black September, a large level of responsibility for the ensuing massacre and poor handling of the situation fell upon the German government and security personnel.

As defined by Birkland (1997), a focusing event points out the flaws in certain political and societal systems. As a result, government officials and the public address the need to change with new and/or modified public policies. The 1972 Munich Olympic attack identified flaws in security, communication systems, and global and domestic counterterrorist strategies. In order to improve counterterrorism, domestic and international governments continue to alter policies and agencies connected to the issue. In *Political Terrorism: Theory, Tactics, and Countermeasures,* Wardlaw (1982) suggested 15 policy options as part of anti-terrorist campaign, a few of which Germany, Israel, and the United Nations implemented. One called for governments to, "Establish a 'third force' or special military units to cope with terrorist attacks. The decision to employ new types of force involves policy decisions about how early to commit military forces, the role of police in anti-terrorist operations, and civil-military relations" (p. 67). Following Black September's assault in Munich, the German government established the GSG-9, an official state counterterrorism group. Ironically, German officials worked with Israeli counterterrorist directors to organize the agency (Klein, 2007). Additionally, the Israeli government set up an Overseas Terrorism Unit within its national security department. According to Lieutenant Colonel Mor of Israel, "'The massacre at Munich helped us understand that we would have to deal with a new subject that we had never before encountered – terror attacks against Israeli targets abroad'" (qtd. in Klein, p. 99). Mor's words go along with Birkland's theory that a focusing event identifies the flaws and need for change in certain areas of policy, in this instance, Israeli counterterrorism. As a result of the 1972 Munich attack, Germany and Israel added to their counterterrorist policies and agencies.

Another one of Wardlaw's (1982) counterterrorism proposals addressed security issues. The proposition necessitated an, "Increase [in] the size and powers of the security forces" (p. 67). The most glaring problem at the 1972 Munich Olympics was the lack of security. The members of Black September entered the Olympic Village without encountering any police officers (Klein, 2007). According to official documentation, "No armed guards or police were positioned in the Olympic Village or at stadium entrances" (Klein, p. 26). The absence of police presence and the underwhelming number of security officials in general significantly contributed to Black September's success. In the aftermath of the attack, the International Olympic Committee established stricter criteria for security. Since the 1972 Games, there have been twice as many security officials as athletes and staff present at every Olympics (Klein, 2007). During the preparation stages of all Games, security now came tops the list of the International Olympic Committee's concerns.

In addition, the 1972 Munich attack and other terrorist strikes in the decade sparked a movement to create international legislation on terrorism. In order to limit the threat of terrorists, Wardlaw (1982) suggested, "a policy of no deals or concessions to terrorists' political demands" (p. 70). Both Israel and the United States employ this policy, but international officials and members of the United Nations remain skeptical of adopting such extreme measures (p.71). At Munich, Germany conceded to Black September's demands and gave them full control over the situation, despite specific instruction from the Israeli government not to adhere to those demands. Germany faced political pressure to obey the demands in order to save the hostages and to end the situation as quickly as possible. The International Olympic Committee, as well as internal

agents, also pressured the German government to save the face of the international sporting event (Reeve, 2000). Had a stricter policy regarding counterterrorism been in effect, the outcome of the crisis may have been different. Even today, international organizations continue to argue and disagree over legislation regarding terrorism.

Black September's successful terrorist campaign at the 1972 Munich Olympics sparked international dialogue on policy in regards to security and counterterrorism. The new public policies implemented as a result of the attack increased security measures worldwide and led to the creation of national counterterrorist units. International organizations continue to deal with public policy issues regarding terrorism today.

The Media and Political Phases

Birkland's (1972) two phases of focusing event politics consist of the response of the news media and the impact it has on the long-term reactions and attitudes of policy makers. In the first phase, media attention, the amount of coverage is directly correlated to the scope, damage, and rarity of the event. Prior to the Black September, the Olympics had already been labeled "the mass media event of the century" (Reeve, p. x). Over 4,000 news reporters and media personnel roamed the Olympic grounds. As the first live-broadcast international sporting event, the Munich Olympics received an overwhelming amount of media coverage. When the attack occurred, the media took advantage of its large presence and widespread audience to broadcast every moment of the crisis. The crisis received additional coverage because of the attack's symbolic social and political nature. The rarity associated with this attack and its consequences sparked increased media coverage during the initial stages and immediate aftermath.

In addition, the extent to which an event satisfies the main characteristics of news determines the amount of coverage it receives. The central features of news consist of timeliness, unusualness, prominence, proximity and impact (Evans, 2008). The Munich Olympics crisis fulfilled each of the criteria to warrant extensive media exposure. The attack took place at an iconic, internationally attended event. As a result, it physically and emotionally impacted not only those directly involved but also people around the world. Black September executed the first large-scale act of terrorism at an international sporting event and exposed the high level of vulnerability to attack at these affairs. The political implications of the terrorist attack enlarged the scope and resulting damage of the issue. Black September launched an attack against innocent citizens of its political enemy and sent a strong message that their political efforts would stop at nothing. The group's use of a celebrated tradition as a platform for terrorism shocked and appalled people worldwide. The consequences and discoveries the crisis brought about forever transformed the nature of media coverage and sporting events.

The extensive impact and prominence of the crisis increased policy-makers incentive to implement change. The media served as an influence and a target of the long-term reactions and attitudes of policy makers. Following the Munich Olympics, the main issues debated and in need of modification in the international arena were counterterrorism efforts and media regulation. As a result of the attack, international policy makers issued stricter laws on security and monitoring. In addition, international and domestic officials in Israel and Germany worked together to implement policy changes on counterterrorist agencies and their authority in Munich-like situations. Additionally, the crisis called attention to the impact and reach of the media. International

officials realized the need for media regulation in the midst of technological advancement and additional media outlets. According to Wardlaw (1982), the two primary concerns of law enforcement in regards to media and terrorism included: "(1) reporting of terrorist violence is excessive, sensational, and sometimes unbalanced . . . (2) newsgathering practices hinder the effective management of terrorist incidents . . ." (p. 78). News reporters priorities consist of developing elaborate details to stories in order to create interesting broadcasts, rather than focusing on the facts of the event. The broadcasts, as in the case of the 1972 Munich Olympics, provide insider information to the public and compromise the crisis response and rescue efforts of law enforcement. In Munich, German security guards secretly surrounded 31 Connollystrasse in an attempt to rescue hostages only to have their cover blown by a live broadcast of their movements, which was seen by Palestinian terrorists inside the building (Reeve, p. 88-89). The German law enforcement immediately aborted the rescue attempt. The media's excessive coverage of the crisis directly hindered the effectiveness of the rescue mission.

Chapter 4: 2013 Boston Marathon Bombings

Downs' Stages of the Issue Attention Cycle

Pre-Problem Stage

The pre-problem stage of Downs' (1971) issue-attention cycle consists of the realization that "some highly undesirable social condition exists but has not yet captured much public attention, even though some experts or interest groups may already be alarmed by it" (p. 39). The "undesirable social condition" leading up to the Boston Marathon bombings was the United States' ongoing vulnerability to terrorism. The events of 9/11 demonstrated the United States' vulnerability to terrorist attacks. Following that day in 2001, talks of possible attacks have swirled around the media but with no immediacy or actual threats mentioned. Boston has been the target of terrorist attacks in the past. Two of the flights that hijacked on 9/11 flew out of Boston Logan International Airport. The city of Boston "is as sensitive as any in the United States about the danger of terrorism attacks" (Irvine, 2013). Hosting the second largest, single-day sporting event of the year, with over 25,000 participants and 500,000 spectators, year after year, only adds to Boston's vulnerability (Halpern, 2013).

Another aspect of Downs' first stage is a discussion of the condition among experts but not in the public sphere. In the case of the Boston Marathon bombings, this stage played out in the previous criminal investigations of Tamerlan Tsarnaev, one of the bombers. In 2011, Russian officials warned the United States of the of the possible terrorist involvement and potential threat posed by Tamerlan Tsarnaev. According to United States Representative Peter King (R) of New York, however, the FBI investigation of Tsarnaev followed the familiar pattern "'where the FBI is given

information about someone being a potential terrorist . . . they look at them, and then they don't take action, and then [those individuals] go out and commit murders'" (qtd. in Knickerbocker, 2013). United States officials, experts in the field, engaged in conversation about the existing problems, Tamerlan Tsarnaev, and a potential terrorist attack, but the issues never came to the public eye until the actual attack took place.

According to Edwards (2013), communication between intelligence agencies has been an ongoing issue. Prior to the attacks, the senate commission discovered an unevenness in information sharing across defense agencies in the United States. Members of the United States Senate, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Government Affairs, experts in the field, engaged in discussions on how to correct the problem, but it did not become a topic of immediacy and importance until public reports leaked on previous investigations of Tamerlan Tsarnaev immediately after the bombings occurred.

The bombings, combined with public media reports of previous investigations of Tsarnaev, and the lack of communication/cooperation between the United States' intelligence agencies, brought the problem of vulnerability to terrorism to the forefront of public concern. The crisis transitioned from the pre-problem stage to the second stage, alarmed discovery and euphoric enthusiasm.

Alarmed Discovery and Euphoric Enthusiasm

The crisis event takes place during the second stage of Downs' (1972) issue-attention cycle and results in the public's alarmed discovery and euphoric enthusiasm "about the evils of a particular problem . . . [and] society's ability to 'solve this problem'

or ‘do something effective’ within a relatively short time” (p. 39). The crisis comes the center of public and media attention, which promotes awareness and interest in the ensuing issues. When the two bombs exploded at the finish line of the Boston Marathon, the scene became one of pandemonium, confusion, and fear. As described by eyewitnesses in Levs and Plott (2013), “The terrorist attack . . . triggered widespread screaming and chaos . . . .” People at the scene ran in every which direction; people at home panicked about their loved ones in the area. The country entered a state of alarm, as major questions were left unanswered: who was responsible, what actually happened, and were there going to be more bombs. Terrorists had capitalized on the event, the city, and the country’s vulnerability to attack.

Within minutes of the bombings, television coverage and social media flooded the public with videos, pictures, and eye-witness accounts at the site of the attack. Over 1,100 media members were on hand to cover the event (Halpern, 2013). Not only did news of the event rapidly spread across the United States but also across the world. The Boston Marathon garners enhanced media attention because of the event’s international appeal and involvement. Ninety different countries were represented by the near 27,000 participants in the 2013 Boston Marathon (Halpern, 2013). International media outlets, such as the United Kingdom’s *The Guardian* and China’s *Xinhua* news channel, provided reports of the attack within the hour (Irvine, 2013). As reported by Rodrigues (2013), over 75% of the public obtained information on the bombings from national television and online news outlets. Dramatic headlines, such as “Sports festival becomes bloodbath” and “Carnage at Boston,” added to the international fear and alarm and brought salience to the vulnerability of terrorism worldwide (Irvine, 2013).

In the aftermath of the attack, the public's alarm transitioned to optimism and hope for justice. Feelings of panic and fear remained high in the days following the bombings, as the suspects were still at large. When authorities identified Tamerlan and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev as the suspects, feelings of optimism and vengeance began to replace worry and fright. According to Bostonian Walter Newman (Kao, 2013), "things began to return to normal . . . ." following the death of Tamerlan Tsarnaev and the arrest of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev. The people of Boston felt safer knowing that those directly responsible for the fatal crisis had been caught.

President Obama and Boston's government officials also contributed to the feelings of optimism and euphoric enthusiasm for solving the problem with their public speeches. As described by Herman Leonard and Arnold Howitt (2013b), two crisis management experts, "the briefings [by officials] were factual, avoided speculation, and emphasised [sic] both what was known and unknown. They were presented directly, succinctly, and calmly." The words, tones, and language used by officials worked to effectively transition the public from feelings of alarm to feeling of hope and optimism. In his address to the nation, President Obama stated, "Make no mistake we will get to the bottom of this and we will find out who did this and we will find out why they did this. Any responsible groups will feel the full weight of justice" (Sherwell & Swaine, 2013). Obama's words increased the public's belief that the government would take effective action and quickly solve the problem.

In addition to the arrests of those responsible and the optimistic attitude of public officials, a majority of the euphoric enthusiasm for solving the problem came as a result of the city of Boston's preparedness for a crisis and its effective, efficient response to the

bombings. The city of Boston and the Boston Athletic Association, which runs the Boston Marathon, had an emergency action plan in place in case of a crisis with such impact as what occurred. Boston's emergency management personnel practiced its all-hazards plan, which was accredited by the national emergency planning evaluation program (EMAP), multiple times in the past two years (Grabar, 2013). When the bombings occurred, emergency management personnel remained calm and executed the plan, clearing the area, saving lives, and bringing order to chaos. The emergency response demonstrated the progress made since 9/11, but the crisis event reinforced the fact that no amount of preparation can prevent a crisis. The United States' government and the public turned their attention to finding ways to decrease the country's vulnerability to terrorist attacks and prevent a similar crisis to the Boston Marathon bombings. As ideas emerged, however, the public began to realize the costs of significant progress in the areas of security and public safety at sporting events.

Realizing the Cost of Significant Progress

The third stage of Down's issue-attention cycle recognizes the costs and sacrifices associated with significant progress. Because it occurred recently, the Boston Marathon crisis is still fresh in the minds of Americans, but as other crises arose, such as school shootings and nuclear threats, the public's attention shifted away from Boston. The public, the media, and the government continue to search for ways to fight against terrorism, especially at sporting events, but they are also focused on making progress on other domestic and foreign issues.

In preparation for the next marathon, the Boston Athletic Association and the city of Boston submitted proposals for enhanced security. The plans included banning all bags and backpacks, limiting spectator access at the finish line, and increasing police presence along the course. As a result of the proposals, the public realized the personal sacrifices and limits to significant increases in security measures and other possible solutions required to address the event's and the country's vulnerability to terrorism.

According to Downs (1972), the development of modern technology and scientific progress resulted in the belief that "a technological solution is . . . to be possible in the case of nearly every problem" (p. 40). Technological solutions, although beneficial in many cases, also have their costs and limits. High technology security systems, such as the Next-Generation Incident Command System (NICS) used at the marathon, cost millions of dollars to develop and install. The NICS provides race officials and emergency personnel with an interactive map of the position of all runners, locations of water and aid stations, and the ability to mark and report any emergency (Keating, 2013). The technology allowed emergency officials to respond rapidly and efficiently to the bombings. Implementing this type of technology at all outdoor sporting events, or even just marathons, would come at a hefty price, and while helping the response to crises, the technology cannot prevent them.

Significant progress is not only costly, but it is also limited. As much as increased security measures can help, the Boston Marathon bombings "emphasized that sports venues can never be 100 percent secure" (Keating, 2013). Sporting events, by nature, will always be vulnerable to attack. The marathon course provides 26.2 miles of open access and opportunity for attack, and with the event's rich history and meaning, "there is no

foolproof method for providing complete protection and prevention" (Leonard & Howitt, 2013). Increased security presence, crowd control, and modern security technology can help to decrease the chance of a crisis and/or act of terrorism, but these options cannot 100% prevent an attack.

Sacrifices will also have to be made by fans and spectators to couple with heightened security (Keating, 2013). Limiting entry and spectator positions along the course and prohibiting bags are progressive changes that would negatively affect crowds and the positive atmosphere of the event. Spectators gather to celebrate, not to be limited or to worry about potential crises. The presence of increased security will produce feelings of fear and uneasiness. Fans will have to sacrifice their piece of mind and some liberties to be better secured.

Gradual Decline of Intense Public Interest

As the crisis drags on or others arise, the public loses interest and turns its attention towards another issue. During this fourth stage, the public attempts to block out the negativity of the crisis. Today, the Boston Marathon crisis continues to transition from the third to the fourth stage as the public replaces its negative memories and emotions with optimistic feelings for next year. People now look to the 118th Boston Marathon as a way to memorialize those who died and to demonstrate the strength of not only the city of Boston but also all of the runners and spectators. The crisis event is so recent, however, that it still holds the public's attention, and when the event arrives next April, the public will be reminded of the terror that struck.

The crisis's transition from the third to fourth stage has been delayed by the court proceedings of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev. With reports of his trial still headlining local and national news, the issue possesses a significant amount public interest. Once the decision is handed down, interest in the event will decrease at a quicker pace. Feelings of vulnerability will be lessened once Tsarnaev has been sentenced for his crimes, and the public will attempt to move on from the terror that Tsarnaev caused. As the public suppresses the memories of the Boston Marathon bombings and the media turns to another crisis, the event and the issue of the United States' vulnerability to terrorism will enter Downs' post-problem stage.

The Post-Problem Stage

A crisis reaches the final stage in Downs' issue-attention cycle when it falls from the center of public attention and enters a state of prolonged limbo (Downs, p. 40). Although the problem may go unsolved, it remain in the backs of the minds of the public. Because the Boston Marathon bombings occurred so recently, the event still holds public attention, but as time passes, the event will eventually enter the post-problem stage. The programs and the policies established to increase security and safety will continue to have an impact on the public, but public concern for the issue of vulnerability to terrorism and the event itself will weaken (Downs, 1972). The issue will continuously exit and reenter the state of "prolonged limbo" (Downs, p. 40), as the public will be reminded of the crisis every April when the Boston Marathon arrives. As much as the public would like to suppress the memories of the fatal attack, the Boston Marathon and the issue of

vulnerability to terrorism will recapture the public's attention on a yearly basis, as all eyes turn to Boston.

The Boston Marathon bombings may fade from public attention, but the crisis event will still serve as a symbol of the United States' vulnerability to terrorist attacks. In the event of a future terrorist attack, this event will be re-evaluated and brought up in comparison. The Boston Marathon bombings will be attached to any future attack at a sporting event. The United States will always be vulnerable to terrorism, and threats will continue to arise. The Boston Marathon bombings will occupy a position in the issue-attention cycle of any future event relating to the problem of the country's vulnerability to terrorism.

Birkland's Theory of Focusing Events

Type Two Focusing Event

Through examination and analysis of the Boston Marathon bombings' issue-attention cycle, one can conclude that the event can be classified as a focusing event. Thomas Birkland (1997) described focusing events as "sudden, unpredictable events . . . [that] influence the public-policy process" (p. 1). The Boston Marathon bombings came as a surprise, caused harm and widespread panic, and churned conversation for public policy changes. The characteristics of the Boston Marathon bombings highlighted in the stages of its issue-attention cycle correspond with Birkland's Type Two (new) focusing event. The bombings "violate[d] expectations, upset norms, and create[d] uncertainty and unpredictability" (Fishman, p. 2). Questions about public safety, security, and government intelligence communication immediately surfaced. The problem sparked

uncertainty about the safety of any public event and our country as a whole, as well as the occurrence of a future attack. The crisis initiated a new attitude toward the country's vulnerability to terrorism and new standards for emergency preparation and response.

Another characteristic of Birkland's Type Two focusing event is the search for blame and responsibility. In contrast to natural disasters, which are seen as acts of god, Type Two focusing events trigger a search for a guilty party (Fishman, 2013). Immediately following the arrests of Tamerlan and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, the Boston bombers, reports of previous terrorists investigations of Tamerlan flooded news and media outlets. Following the lead of influential politicians, the public began to place blame on United States' intelligence agencies and their failure to communicate and share information of the investigations and the potential terrorist threat across governmental departments. Members of the United States' Congress "are demanding to know why America's top law enforcement agency did not keep closer tables on Tamerlan Tsarnaev" (Washington, 2013), after multiple warnings of his link to Russian extremists. Government officials criticized the FBI's handling of investigations into the allegations of Tamerlan Tsarvaev's connection to terrorist organizations. The public criticisms shifted blame towards the United States' intelligence committees. Congressmen, such as Dana Rohrabacher, stated their beliefs that had the FBI taken stronger action, the Boston Marathon bombings could have been prevented (Herszenhorn, 2013). Although the Tsarvaevs' carried out the act, the public and the political spheres searched for internal resources of blame and responsibility.

Additionally, Birkland's literature emphasizes a focusing event's potential to influence public policy. A crisis, such as the Boston Marathon bombings, commands so

much public attention that it has implications in the political sphere. A focusing event points out the flaws in certain systems and/or the need for change in others. This, in turn, leads to the call for changes in public policy regarding these specific areas (Fishman, 2013). As previously stated, the Boston Marathon bombings revealed flaws in the communication system between national intelligence agencies and governmental departments. Government officials placed blame on intelligence agents, stating they had the means to prevent the attack. The government has since proposed policy changes in regards to communication and information sharing. In the immediate aftermath of the Boston Marathon bombings, the FBI changed its policy on information sharing and terrorist investigations. Under the new policy, all federal case agents will be informed of persons of interest in terrorist investigations and the person's whereabouts. Previously, only one to two case agents received information about and/or knew the whereabouts of the persons of interest (Schmidt, 2013). The Boston Marathon bombings had direct policy implications in the political sphere.

The Boston Marathon also brought to light the United States' vulnerability to terrorism and the limitations to outright prevention of such attacks. The Boston Marathon is celebration of history, tradition, and the accomplishments of thousands of runners. The last thing on the minds of those in attendance, apart from security and emergency personnel, was the possibility of a terror strike. Spectators and participants were immersed in feelings of pride and jubilation. When the bombs exploded at the finish line, the eyes of not only United States' citizens, but also those worldwide, shifted to Boston and the realization that no event is an exception from the threat of terrorism. In addition, the public realized that no matter how great the preparation, no event can 100% protect

itself from attack. The city of Boston implemented and practiced a highly accredited emergency action plan leading up to the marathon (Grabar, 2013). The bombings showed that even the most prepared and efficient plans cannot prevent or solve the issue of terrorism. This realization promoted discussion about public policy changes in the areas of security and crowd sourcing at public events, specifically marathons. Proposals include implementing the use of high technology bomb sensors, restricting public access to certain areas along race routes, and increasing security presence along the routes (Leonard & Howitt, 2013). Each proposal reduces the chance of another event like the Boston Marathon bombings but cannot fully prevent one.

The nature of the Boston Marathon attack, as a focusing event, poses difficulty to implementing effective policy changes. The event identified the country's vulnerability to terrorism but complicated the normal process of public policy changes that follows Type Two focusing events. The Boston Marathon has had implications on public policy, but the process remains ongoing.

The Media and Political Phases

The response of the news media and the long-term reactions and attitudes of policy makers make up the second part Birkland's focusing event theory. The media response to a crisis event depends on its scope, impact, and damage, immediate and long-term. Examining the issue-attention cycle of the Boston Marathon bombings, specifically the alarmed discovery stage, one can see that the characteristics of the public sporting event and the crisis sparked widespread media coverage. The international scope of the event, along with the randomness and fatal damage of the attacks, attracted media

attention from Boston to Beijing. The extensive media coverage, from any and every outlet, intensified public attention and generated increased conversation for counterterrorism in the public and political sphere.

In his remarks on the relationship between media and terrorism, Wardlaw (1982) argued, "The media must adopt a more specifically ethical stance and must attempt to evolve sensible and workable self-control mechanisms" (p. 86), especially in terrorist reports. Thirty-one years later, the media's response to the Boston Marathon attack heeded Wardlaw's advice. Public relations firms advised clients to cutoff all social media flow and to refuse to comment on the events at hand. Actions such as these helped to decrease rumor circulation. Although the details of event were simultaneously broadcasted across all media platforms, the regulations associated with the outcome of the Munich Olympics played a role in mitigating the media effects on the crisis. Long-term reactions and attitudes of public policy makers remained focused on safety and security issues rather than problems with the media.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

A theoretical analysis of each attack using Down's Issue-Attention Cycle Theory and Birkland's Focusing Event Theory provides a basis of comparison for the events. The organization, execution, and aftermath of the 1972 Munich Olympics and 2013 Boston Marathon terrorist attacks differed, but the events, despite being forty years apart, ultimately expose the same reality: the world will always be vulnerable to terrorism. Technological advancements, heightened security measures, and counterterrorism units provide increased terrorist prevention and response methods, but none are foolproof. As prepared as the city of Boston was for an attack, the emergency management and terrorist prevention measures did not thwart the Tsarnaevs' assault on the Boston Marathon. Although each crisis has its unique features and preceding factors, the theoretical analyses identify many similarities in their social and political implications that add to the dialogue of vulnerability to attack.

Social Implications

The social implications of the two crises reveal the roles the sporting events and the media play in adding to vulnerability and incentivizing terrorism. Although no setting or event can be one hundred percent safe, the 1972 and 2013 attacks serve as two of the most prominent examples of the increased vulnerability to terrorism and violence at international sporting events. Black September and the Tsarnaev brothers took advantage of heavily attended, widely broadcasted, and extremely meaningful sports traditions. In *Middle Eastern Terrorism*, Reeve (2000) asserted, "[The Olympics] offered the Palestinians a showcase where they could bring their grievance to the millions watching

on television around the world" (p. 60). The international popularity and attention on the event provided increased incentive for terrorists to attack. This assertion also applies to the Boston Marathon and the Tsarnaevs' attack as well. Influenced by extremist beliefs, the Tsarnaevs took advantage of a highly populated and broadcasted event to display their attack on the American values of freedom and public safety. In both instances, the presence of mass media and viewership increased the incentive for an attack. Sporting events attract international media attention and offer a variety of tactical options.

Both the 1972 and 2013 attacks demonstrated that terrorists will stop at nothing in order to carry out their mission. Terrorists disregard all moral boundaries in pursuit of their goals. Although performed forty years apart, the attacks of 1972 and 2013 exemplify the ongoing threat of terrorism and its continuous use as a means to achieve political objectives and to make political statements. In each of these instances, the attackers crossed moral boundaries. Black September and the Tsarnaev brothers targeted innocent people and international values and traditions. While Black September murdered 11 blameless Israeli Olympic athletes, the Tsarvaevs' killed seven unsuspecting marathon spectators and injured hundreds of other runners and bystanders. Additionally, both parties carried out attacks on iconic events. The Olympics represent international sportsmanship, peace, and cooperation. The Boston Marathon symbolizes an international tradition and falls on a day that recognizes American independence and its founding values of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." The terrorists attempted to put a permanent stain on these events and what they stand for.

In terms of social implications, the 1972 Munich attack and the 2013 Boston Marathon bombings exposed the increased, and at times negative, role and reach of the

media in crises events. Between 1972 and 2013, the world evolved into a digital and constantly connected age. With the developments of modern technology, information flows quickly and extensively. Social media and television allow news to travel across the globe instantaneously. A major effect of this digital age and widespread access is the role of the media in terror events. Media outlets provide a way for terrorists to create spectacles of their work and showcase their strength to a global audience. In *Political Terrorism: Theory, Tactics, and Countermeasures*, Dr. Grant Wardlaw (1982) argued that the world has entered an era in which, "Television terrorists can no more do without the media than the media can resist the terror-event" (p. 76). In an era of television terrorists, the media serves as an agent, playing the roles of exhibitor and messenger. The media broadcasted both the 1972 Munich Olympics and the 2013 Boston Marathon across multiple platforms worldwide. At the time, the Munich Olympics was the most widely covered event in history, drawing one billion viewers in over 100 countries and hosting over 4,000 journalists and other media members (Reeve, 2008). The continuous coverage allows for viewers to witness all aspects of an event, positive and negative. It also increases the risk of false information flow and digitally altered images. All of these factors contribute to the media's increased influential role in terrorism.

The media not only provides a platform for terrorists to broadcast their attacks, but it also serves as a hindrance to terror response and public well-being. According to Wardlaw (1982), "Competition between media organisations seems to heighten the necessity to focus on the emotion-generating as opposed to the purely informational aspects of news reporting" (p. 76). The media's focus on breaking a story and broadcasting attention-grabbing, as opposed to informative, news negatively impacts the

quality and accuracy of the information it provides. The flow of rumors and misinformation from the media played influential roles in both the 1972 and 2013 attacks. Misinformation from media in Munich led people to falsely believe all hostages survived and the crisis was solved quietly and peacefully. In reality, the opposite occurred, as the outcome was a scene of chaos and death. Similarly, the first reports on the Boston Marathon blamed the smoke and loud noises on a celebratory cannon. This report was followed up by one that the event was not an act of terrorism but instead the work of a few domestic citizens trying to gain attention. Not until reports of fatalities and an address by government officials was it confirmed to be an act of terrorism. In addition, several reports of other terrorist attacks in the city of Boston that day caused citizens more unnecessary stress, fear, and anxiety. For example, a report linking a fire at the JFK library to terrorists led Bostonians and fellow Americans to believe that another strike could come at any time, anywhere, due to the distance between the rumored strikes.

The social implications of the crises regard the legacy of sporting events and the role of the media. Due to their reach and popularity, athletic competitions and their media coverage provide incentives for attack. Iconic sporting events, such as the Olympics, hold deep meaning and draw large audiences. The media adds to the attention with its global, instantaneous broadcasts and sensationalized-focus. The combination adds to society's vulnerability to terrorism.

Political Implications

The political implications of these crises and the vulnerability they revealed affect the government, prevention efforts, and the growth of terrorism. After a devastating crisis, society's ensuing action centers on placing blame and responsibility, frequently at the government's expense. Humans tend to be overly optimistic at times of crisis and expect the government to be infallible, placing "the burden of defense . . . increasingly . . . upon local government, the private sector, and the individual citizen" (Jenkins qtd. in Wardlaw, p. 58). The public leans on the government as a sense of safety, protection, and mostly hope. Crises, such as the Munich Olympics and the Boston Marathon, expose the global environment's vulnerability to terrorism and increase the fear and anxiety associated with the threat of attack. In the aftermath of the 1972 Munich Olympics and 2013 Boston Marathon crises, experts, national and international officials, and the public put blame and responsibility on the governments of Germany and the United States, respectively. Israelis and Americans expected more from the governments, international and domestic, in terms of crisis prevention, preparation, and response. In Munich, multiple governments played roles preparing for and responding to the attack. The Israeli government was at fault for failing to heed the advice and warnings of security and psychology experts regarding the increased threat Israeli athletes and the event at large were exposed to in Munich. The German government's botched attempt at resolving Black September's assault at Munich earned them blame and public outrage. In the case of the United States, the government's preventative measures and emergency response initially resonated well with the public. Reports of failed intelligence and lack of communication among government agencies regarding Tamerlan Tsarnaev's connections

to extremist organizations, however, shifted the public's view. People came to believe the attack could have been prevented had government agencies cooperated with each other and shared information on the actions and threat of Tsarnaev. In the moment, the governments of Germany, Israel, and the United States acted how they believed was best fit for the situation. The public can pose questions of "what if" or "why not this" forever, but governmental crisis prevention and response measures continue to stand little chance of eliminating vulnerability.

From a theoretical perspective, terrorism defines the term crisis, as it "shocks, upsets norms, and produces change to public policy" (Fishman, p. 8). Attacks immediately subject victims to times of crisis and set off a cycle of events. Terrorist attacks are violent crises with far-reaching effects and no end or easy solution in sight. Not only does terrorism theoretically define a crisis, but it also leads to the analysis of another key crisis: vulnerability to attack. Following a terrorist attack, counterterrorism and prevention experts search for explanations as to how the attack occurred under the current circumstances. They review the overall prevention plans, security measures, response drills, and emergency management personnel involved in the process. In most cases, experts' conclusions lead to the same result: vulnerability is a factor that cannot be eliminated or predicted. Wardlaw (1982) concluded from his research on political terrorism, "a well-engineered [terror] campaign will engender a continuous, high level of anxiety because the threat is vague, unpredictable, and incomprehensible" (p. 35). Each terrorist attack increases the fear of the public, especially that associated with the increased awareness of vulnerability and the chances of an ensuing strike. Law enforcement and counterterrorist intelligence agencies spend countless hours and

resources designing and employing prevention plans prior to highly attended, well-publicized affairs, such as international sporting events. Their efforts go wasted in the occurrence of a successful attack, exposing the unsolvable nature of vulnerability. The characteristics of the events, such as large crowds, widespread media attention, and symbolic meaning, render the occasions increasingly vulnerable to attack, even with enhanced security and prevention methods. Terrorists execute in a continuous cycle of surprise, fear, and innovation. If one tactic is prevented, another is developed. For example, after the 1972 Munich Olympics, airports worldwide enhanced security and screening processes. In the years immediately following these changes, hijacking, as a form of international terrorism, decreased, dropping from an average of 15 incidents/year to five incidents/year. As anti-terrorist efforts deterred hijackers, they opened the way for alternative tactics. The use of explosives and bombings increased from an average of 150/year prior to 1972, to an average of 230 incidents/year from 1974-1980, while the use of assassination and hostage-barricades also increased by about 150% over the same time period (Mickolus, 1983). The enhanced focus and prevention of one method, led to the added use of others. The statistics go to show that prevention methods can be effective in deterring terrorist tactics, but the alternatives still leave events, governments, cities, etc. in a state of constant vulnerability.

Following the 1972 Munich Olympics, Black September entered the center stage of global terrorism and continued to execute terrorist attacks on Israelis, Jordanians, and other Arab nations. Their success and innovative tactics sparked the formation of new terrorist organization worldwide. The rise of groups, such as Al Queda, came with negative consequences and has “mutated [terrorism] from spectacle to atrocity”

(Ensalaco, p. 1). Since the 1972 Munich attack, terror strikes have become more prevalent, violent, and fatal. Black September set the precedent for violent spectacles at international events; modern terrorist groups built upon and escalated the group's "conservative" version of terrorism. Although Black September dissolved in 1973, the group set the tone for the emergence of international terrorism and brought about a new era of terror and fear. In effect, "The secular Palestinian terror organizations . . . constructed a network that facilitated terror operations in Europe, North Africa, and Asia as well as the Middle East through the 1970s and well into the 1980s" (Ensalaco, p. 264), which set the stage for the emergence of multiple international terrorist organizations. Muslim terrorist organizations, under the leadership of Bin Laden, created a network from Chechnya to Indonesia (Ensalaco, 2008). The formation of these organizations, along with the advancements of modern weaponry and technology, give way to increased vulnerability to attack. The combination provides new and increased tactics, sources of information, and settings for terrorist groups to take advantage of. The Munich crisis demonstrated the vulnerable nature of international sporting events to terrorism and violence, as well as prompted the realization that anyone and anywhere can be subject to attack.

The Reality of Vulnerability

The social and political implications of the crises expose the vulnerable environment of modern society. International sporting events, some of society's longest traditions, are ideal targets for terrorists. Governmental efforts to limit terrorism only increase vulnerability as prevention methods led to the invention of new tactics and

organizations. The global network that terrorists work within enables increased communication and larger-scale campaigns. While government and international agencies attempt to decrease vulnerability, terrorists simultaneously find ways to keep it constant.

Prior to the 2004 Sydney Olympics, Alex Gilady, an Israeli member of the International Olympic Committee, put vulnerability in perspective, stating, "You can't prepare for everything . . . When you're at the barn, you don't believe the horse will run away until it runs away" (qtd. in Wolff, 2002). Vulnerability is a concept that cannot be avoided, no matter the strength of prevention methods or preparation. By employing extensive preventative measures, security officials set out to limit their event's vulnerability. Although an event may not seem susceptible to vulnerability, it still possesses a certain level that becomes exposed when a threat or an attack occurs. The city of Boston prepared and practiced emergency action plans to decrease the chances of a successful attack. In addition to the advanced prevention methods employed at the site, the marathon was the last event people thought terrorists would attack. The Tsarnaevs' bombings at the finish line, however, exposed the vulnerability of the event and again highlighted the issue's unpreventable nature.

Due to the number of terrorist methods and organizations, vulnerability cannot be eliminated. An event, building, or any site is left vulnerable because of the extensiveness of modern terrorism. With modern technology and intelligence, one would assume that vulnerability to attack has decreased. The success rate of terrorism, however, contradicts this assumption. The increasing number of effective strikes cancels out the increasing level of preparedness and prevention. Each successful attack demonstrates the constant

level of vulnerability to terrorism. The work of emergency management personnel, counterterrorist units, national governments, and international organizations to prevent and to thwart terrorist plots can decrease the likelihood of the use of certain methods, but it cannot eliminate all of the possibilities, which leaves vulnerability constant. As prepared as an individual event, city, or nation may be, its efforts can only go so far in preventing an attack. No matter how many hypothetical situations and possible terrorist plots experts generate and assess, vulnerability will still exist. The stark reality is that for every one plot identified, there exists an infinite number more.

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